

What is claimed is:

1. A mass storage device operable to store data and having an overall
5 storage capacity, the mass storage device including a panel on which a capacity
indicator is positioned and the capacity indicator being operable to display either a
used storage capacity or a free storage capacity of the mass storage device, or
being operable to display both free and used storage capacities of the mass
storage device.
- 10 2. The mass storage device of claim 1 wherein the mass storage device
comprises a removable mass storage device.
3. The mass storage device of claim 2 wherein the removable mass
15 storage device comprises a removable hard disk.
4. The mass storage device of claim 1 wherein the capacity indicator
comprises at least one light-emitting device.
- 20 5. The mass storage device of claim 4 wherein each light emitting device
comprises a light emitting diode.
6. The mass storage device of claim 5 wherein the mass storage device
includes a plurality of light emitting diodes having a plurality of different colors.
- 25 7. The mass storage device of claim 1 wherein the capacity indicator
comprises a liquid crystal display.
8. The mass storage device of claim 1 wherein the panel comprises a
30 front panel of a housing containing electronics of the mass storage device.

9. The mass storage device of claim 1 wherein the mass storage device is adapted to receive capacity-update signals and wherein the capacity indicator is operable to display the storage capacity or capacities responsive to the capacity-update signals.

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10. A computer system, comprising:
computer circuitry for executing programs and storing data; and
a mass storage device coupled to the computer circuitry and being operable to store data and having an overall storage capacity, the mass storage device including a panel on which a capacity indicator is positioned and the capacity indicator being operable to display either a used storage capacity or a free storage capacity of the mass storage device, or being operable to display both free and used storage capacities of the mass storage device.

15 11. The computer system of claim 11 wherein the computer circuitry includes a capacity-update component operable to determine the desired storage capacity of the mass storage device and to provide the determined storage capacity to the mass storage device, and wherein the capacity indicator displays the desired storage capacity responsive to the determined storage capacity
20 provided by the computer circuitry.

12. The computer system of claim 10 further comprising:
at least one input device coupled to the computer circuitry; and
at least one output device coupled to the computer circuitry

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13. The computer system of claim 10 wherein the mass storage device comprises a removable mass storage device.

14. The computer system of claim 13 wherein the removable mass
30 storage device comprises a removable hard disk.

15. The computer system of claim 10 wherein the capacity indicator comprises at least one light-emitting device.

5 16. The computer system of claim 15 wherein each light emitting device comprises a light emitting diode.

17. The computer system of claim 16 wherein the mass storage device includes a plurality of light emitting diodes having a plurality of different colors.

10 18. The computer system of claim 10 wherein the capacity indicator comprises a liquid crystal display.

15 19. The computer system of claim 10 wherein the panel comprises a front panel of a housing containing electronics of the mass storage device.

20. A method of indicating a capacity of a mass storage device, comprising:

determining a capacity of the mass storage device; and
displaying an indication of the determined capacity.

20 21. The method of claim 20 wherein determining a capacity of the mass storage device comprises determining a used capacity of the mass storage device.

25 22. The method of claim 20 wherein displaying an indication of the determined capacity comprises displaying the determined capacity as a percentage of an overall storage capacity of the device.

30 23. The method of claim 20 wherein displaying an indication of the determined capacity comprises displaying different colors, each color corresponding to a portion of an overall storage capacity of the mass storage device.

24. The method of claim 20 wherein determining a capacity of the mass storage device comprises:

5 determining external to the mass storage device a capacity of the mass storage device; and

applying to the mass storage device signals indicating the externally determined capacity.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein determining external to the mass storage device a capacity of the mass storage device comprises periodically
10 determining the capacity.